

DEBBIE MUCARSEL-POWELL
26TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
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September 3, 2020

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

The September 1, 2020 announcement regarding the Administration's plans to help farmers of seasonal and perishable fruits and vegetables is an important step.

Farmers in Miami-Dade County produce the most beautiful and delicious squash, okra, bell peppers, strawberries and more. They generate over 250 thousand jobs and over \$18 billion in gross regional product. They feed families across the nation all year-round. We need to make sure that we wholeheartedly have their back.

But as you know, far too many farmers in my district and throughout South Florida have been seriously hurt by unfair Mexican trade practices. Some have already lost their farming businesses, and others are at risk of losing theirs. This danger is only compounded by the disastrous effects that the pandemic has had on our agriculture community. We cannot fail our farmers.

As you proceed with negotiations with the Mexican government over the next 90 days, I implore you to keep in mind *all* seasonal and perishable products that have been suffering from current trade practices. Addressing concerns pertaining to strawberries and bell peppers is crucial, but it is only part of the issue. Farmers who grow squash, okra, avocados, and other products must remain top of mind for you during the negotiations, and they must never become an afterthought.

I further urge strong negotiations on behalf of these vital domestic producers and the use of all additional actions and investigations needed to correct these unreasonable foreign trade practices and large harm they continue to cause to the South Florida and larger U.S. industry.

If my office can be of assistance in connecting you with farmers to share first-hand accounts of the harm done by Mexican trade practices, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your attention to issues important to *all* South Florida farmers to provide meaningful relief.

Sincerely,



Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress